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Pumas to Kick Off Spring Break at Conference

By Casey Snow
News Writer

One of the best things advertised and said by students about Saint Joseph's College is being able to participate in a variety of clubs. Of these clubs, Puma Women is one for women and supporters of women to raise awareness and support for issues that affect women all over the world.

Many students on campus will recognize the Puma Women from their annual event, Take Back the Night, which takes place in October to support victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. This year, the Puma Women club is taking their first trip to a conference in Texas with the hopes of bringing more awareness back to the Joe.

The Women's Empowerment Conference (WECon) will be in Austin, Texas on March 7th and 8th during the first weekend of our spring break. While the conference is about two years old, this year it has some great panels for the Puma Women to attend, such as gender messages in the media, empowering women with disabilities, and honoring



everyday activism.

"We're hoping to bring back information and resources to put on more programs on campus as well as getting the local Rensselaer community involved," says Savannah Carver, senior Educational Studies major and Puma Women treasurer. This is the first trip that Puma Women will be taking, and they're hoping for a big turnout.

"As a strong feminist and a bystander trainer, I was excited

to be chosen to go to Austin for this event," says Ashley Brinkman, a junior Art major and Puma Women member of two years. Five members of Puma Women will be going to the conference: Kayla Wojak, sophomore Sociology major, Erin Hill, senior Biology and Athletic Training majors, Rachel King, senior Biology major, Brinkman, and Carver. Sharon Moore, the nurse at Saint Joseph's College and Laura Wagner, Saint Joseph's

Left: Women's Empowerment Conference (WeCon) logo for 2015 that five Puma Women members and two staff members will be attending to kick off their spring break in March. Photo courtesy of weconaustin.org

College's director of Counseling Services, and the Puma Women sponsor will also be attending.

In addition to Take Back the Night, the Puma Women will also be hosting a 30 Hour Famine to raise awareness of child hunger in the world. Activities like this encourage students to learn about social issues around the world, but also to get involved and take a stand.

This conference will only further the club's activism and programs on campus. Brinkman told us, "I'm excited to go to WECon and learn. I want to bring exciting things back that we can use to improve campus life."

Members of this club work and are working hard to host programs and get the campus involved. To become a member of this club, contact any member of the Puma Women, especially Rachle King, Puma Women President, or Laura Wagner via email.

Annual Mini Cheer Camp Another Big Success for Puma Cheer

By Megan Atwood
Guest Writer

On Saturday, February 7th, the Saint Joseph's College cheerleading squad held their annual mini cheer camp. The camp ran from 10 am to 3 pm. Students in grades kindergarten through fourth attended the camp, with a total of 27 mini cheerleaders present. Each mini cheerleader received a purple t-shirt with the caption, "Cheerleader from bow to toe." Parents/guardians of the mini cheerleaders also had the option of purchasing pom-pom's and

cheer bows.

The mini cheerleaders learned a floor cheer, three sideline chants, and a short dance routine. A collection of what was learned was performed during halftime of the men's basketball game in the main gym in the Alumni Fieldhouse. Sophomore, bio-chem double major, Shannon Mauger had a blast with the older kids in the group. "The mini cheer camp is a great way to get the community involved in Saint Joseph's College events. We love teaching our mini cheerleaders a few cheers and showing the older girls the basics



Mauger and Young teach mini cheer camp members their new routine on Saturday, February 7, 2015. The camp was extremely successful with the Saint Joseph's College Cheer squad reporting that the campers learned a lot of skills as well as the team earning money for their needs for the future. Photo Courtesy of Megan Atwood.



Saint Joseph's College Cheer squad members pictured left to right include Cori Young, junior Mass Communications major, Shannon Mauger, junior Biology major, and Megan Atwood, junior Mass Communications major are posing with 3rd and 4th grade students who participated in the annual Mini Puma Cheer camp on Saturday, February 7, 2015. The cheerleaders taught them floor, chants, and dance routines throughout the day. Photo courtesy of Megan Atwood.

of stunting." Shannon, along with a few other Saint Joseph's College cheerleaders, worked with the 3rd and 4th graders at the camp. These were the only girls who were able to stunt for the performance.

Cheer captain Adriana Lugosan was thrilled with the turn out of the event. This was Lugosan's third year being involved with the mini cheer camp. She commented, "Each year the camp has grown with what we do and teach the girls. The Saint Joe cheerleaders really enjoy prepping for the mini cheer camp because it allows us to kind of take a step back and create an easier routine that the kids love to do. It's fun for the kids and its fun for us too! We all enjoy flashing back to Hannah

Montana and Camp Rock songs from our childhoods and this year really allowed us to do that with the music mix we selected." She noted that without the group efforts of the cheer squad, this event wouldn't be possible.

The mini cheer camp was a success and is likely to be carried on for many more years to come. It is the one yearly fundraiser that the cheer squad provides, in hopes of bringing in students and families from the Rensselaer community.

At the end of the camp this year, the Saint Joseph's College cheer squad made over \$100. The money is to be deposited into the cheerleaders athletic fund account, and will be used for future cheer squad needs.

Another Excellent Women’s Retreat

By Josh Alengo
News Writer

Every year, campus ministry hosts a Women’s Retreat, where women gather for a day of bonding and reflection. This year’s retreat happened Saturday, the 7th of February, and was organized by Brother Tim Hemm C.P.P.S. and Student Coordinator Kate Hickner, a junior Elementary Education major, who is also the president of Habitat for Humanity on campus.

In her words, “the Women’s Retreat is a day of recollection for the women on campus. Any woman interested is invited to attend, to share, to find community in faith, and to strengthen spiritual bonds.” The retreat recurs annually, and involved this year was Sister Donna Liette C.P.P.S., a nun with a history at St. Joseph’s College. According to Hickner, “[Sr.

Donna] used to teach at Saint Joseph’s College, and actually started Kairos here. She was involved with campus ministry and was in charge of the first ten Kairos’ [retreats].” With a history like that, Br. Tim and Hickner “thought she would be the perfect person to put on this retreat for us.” On top of that, Sr. Donna does work in Chicago and holds “retreat-type events” with youth there, so the decision was easily made.

When asked further for stories or anecdotes from the event, Hickner respectfully denied, stating, “Confidentiality is a pretty big deal when it comes to retreats so I’m not sure if there’s much more I can share. Sorry about that.” That’s part of the experience for the participants. The Women’s Retreat is all about bonding and introspection. Hickner says the experience is different for every girl every

time, and that they always get something out of it. Hickner stated that the goal for next year is to get as many girls involved as possible. She and Br. Tim want to get the word out to the women on campus to give the retreat a try.



The candle was integrated as a symbol of spirituality and recollection
Photo courtesy of Google Images

Love Yourself Week! Saint Joseph’s College Pre-Valentines Day Celebrations

By Ana Lara
News Writer

Beginning February 9th through February 13th Saint Josephs Campus held a week dedicated to positive female self esteem and love.

The week began with Mirrorless Monday throughout the Campus and female dorms such as Seifert, Noll, Halas, and the top floor of Justin. Mirrors were covered to promote positive self-image without self-affirmation from a mirror instead it encouraged recognition of ones true value. “Beauty is what you feel about yourself, not about what you see in a mirror!” Saint Joseph’s College used the hashtag “#loveyourselfie” in order to spread word of the day.

Tuesday was “Too Sweet Tuesday.” Students came to the Gasper Center and wrote letters of appreciation and love to their favorite valentines.

Wednesday was a HIT with a Self Defense class hosted by the Rensselaer Police Departments

Officer Schmidt in the Gasper Center. Students learned the basics of self-defense including the physical and mental aspects of it. Students were encouraged to sign up before coming to the class and bring friends!

Thursday’s “If you really knew me” was hosted in the Ballroom. About 19 students attended. Students were asked basic personal questions about themselves; the night was a great opportunity for them to grow closer as peers and friends.

Friday’s closing ceremony for the “Love yourself” week included a presentation from Laura Wagner. Female students came in and sat around in a circle. Laura began with a speech about Self-image; many students found the word “self-image” to be negative. Laura had a few activities that included going around the room to three people saying three negative things about yourself later followed by three positive things. She said, “You can always find something

negative about yourself however you must strive to find the most beautiful parts of yourself and love them.” Finally, students were encouraged to write a “Body Contract” for themselves promising to love themselves for who they are and treat their bodies with love and respect.

John May closed the ceremony with uplifting words, passages and a prayer, a great ending to a wonderful week of positivity and love! Student Josie Brown said “I loved the last ceremony. I didn’t get a chance to go to any of the other activities this past week, but I learned how to try to love myself instead of hating myself for the things I can’t change.” This week was a perfect start before Valentines Day. Saint Joseph’s College truly spread the love throughout the entire campus and students felt it .

Right: Criminal Justice majors, Alex Meier ‘16 and Heather Monk ‘16 participate in the self-defense class put on by the Rensselaer Police Department on Wednesday, February 11. Photo courtesy of SJC Housing

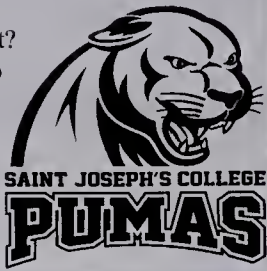
Left: Dorms all around campus blacked out their bathroom and hallway mirrors for “Mirrorless Monday” on Monday, February 9. Photo courtesy of Ana Lara



Upcoming Puma Events!

February 20 - Open Mic Night
February 21 - Winter Formal
February 22 - College Goal Sunday
February 23 - Housing Forms Due

Want to get the word out about your event?
Email the date and name of your event to
Kylie Hill at
khw10051@saintjoe.edu or
Alyssa Cook at
acw10024@saintjoe.edu!

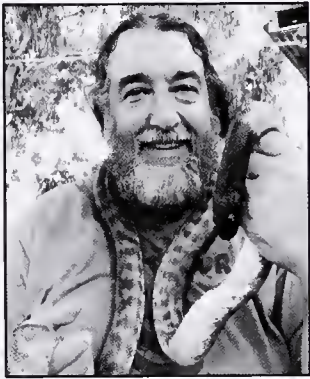


Meet the Staff: Professor Bob Brodman

By Natalie Dziadosz
News Writer

Many people on campus and off know Dr. Robert Brodman. Dr. Bob, as he is known to most who take his classes, got his BA in Biochemistry from Rutgers University with a concentration in biotechnology , an MS in Biological Chemistry from Michigan State University with a concentration in molecular biology, a MS Biology from Eastern Michigan University with a concentration in college teaching, and a PhD in Ecology from Kent State with concentrations in evolution and zoology.

At Saint Joseph’s, Dr. Bob teaches a multitude of classes, including General Biology, Core 6, Animal Behavior, as well as various other courses. “I am lucky because I get to teach a lot of courses that focus on animals and ecology,” Dr. Brodman said. When asked what he likes about the Core program Brodman said, “I like to be able to team teach with colleagues from several different departments and learn from each other.” On his favorite class to teach Brodman said, “It is hard for me to single out one or even a few classes because I really like the variety of topics that I teach.” He went on to mention several of his classes including Invertebrate Zoology and Herpetology that



Professor of Biology, Dr. Bob Brodman
Photo courtesy of Dr. Brodman

go on spring break trips to places like the Smoky Mountains. He then said, “It’s so hard to pick a favorite class, but I am going to go with my Amphibian Populations Research course because it is the most unique course that I am ever going to create. The course was a response to concerns about a worldwide decline of amphibian populations. I train students to collect data and monitor amphibian populations as part of a global effort to determine if and why amphibians were declining.” His advice to anyone wishing to take any of his classes is, “Expect large doses of enthusiasm for all creatures great and small.”

Outside of the classroom, Dr. Bob mentioned that he is a nerd that is really into sports. He loves science fiction, horror and fantasy in addition to being a scientist. About sports, he says, “The jock-side of me loved playing football, baseball, bowling, and volleyball.” He even coached some of his daughter’s youth teams. When asked why he came to SJC and what he likes most about it he said, “After interviewing at several colleges I thought that SJC’s Biology Department had more potential for growth than my other options, and I learned that the Chemistry Department had a position open that gave my wife an opportunity to join me here. What I like best about SJC is that I was given the opportunity to carve my own niche by creating my own courses and diversifying our programs. I didn’t expect that level of academic freedom.” I’m sure all of us here are glad he joined the Saint Joseph’s College family!



Tax The Church Cats and Dogs

By Steven Sewell
Opinions Writer

It has been ingrained in many American’s heads that churches should not be taxed. By exempting churches from taxation, many believe that the separation of church and state is upheld and freedom of religion is supported. I disagree. Tax exemptions for churches directly violate the separation of church and state by providing financial benefits to organizations. It should enrage every American, religious and nonreligious, that secular charities such as the Red Cross are required to report incomes to the IRS, while churches never have to file a tax return, but are automatically exempted from income tax. It shows special treatment, and is unconstitutional. These tax breaks force American taxpayers to support religious



institutions even if they disagree with them. To account for lost revenue, it forces Christians to support Satanic churches, atheists and agnostics to support religion itself, and everyone to support pretend religions such as Scientology. The major benefit behind these exemptions from taxes is the banning of political campaigning by churches, but even that doesn’t work. Alliance Defending Freedom, a Christian advocacy group, encourages pastors to openly endorse political candidates to their congregations. It is readily apparent that many churches have a political slant and have religious leaders that endorse certain parties or politicians. Every year, pastors send videos of themselves electioneering in the pulpit to the IRS to prove their “freedom of religion”, yet the IRS has never removed 501(c)(3) status from a religious institution, at least to my knowledge. Personally, I find it annoying that certain religious leaders have parsonages that are not only worth millions of dollars, but are tax exempt as well. It’s estimated that US churches own nearly half a trillion dollars in untaxed property, and it’s time for taxpayers to stop fronting the bills.

Photo Courtesy of Ashley R Brinkman

By Meghan Hennessey
Opinions Writer

We have all heard about the age-old feud between cats and dogs. The two popular household pets seem to be at a continuous battle over which is “the best.” Cat lovers argue that their beloved cats are superior to dogs while dog lovers argue that their dogs are superior to cats. There seems to be no in between. How can you be a cat lover and a dog lover at the same time? I don’t think it’s all that difficult.

Growing up in rural Indiana I have owned my fair share of barn cats and scruffy strays as well as a few privileged indoor cats. I can’t deny that I absolutely love cats. They’re cute, fluffy, and oh so cuddly. Who could resist a little kitten? Cats are independent and don’t require much attention. They don’t constantly need affection but will accept affection and will seek it out when they do want it. Cats don’t need much care either. They just need food, water, and an occasional litter change. No walks or extensive play times are needed (although they do enjoy play times, but they don’t need them to be healthy and happy). Even their veterinary costs are much lower than that of a dog. Cats are great pets and are perfect

companions for many people.

I would also describe myself as huge dog fan. As a young girl my bed was overflowing with stuffed dogs of all sizes. I begged my parents for years to let me have a dog, and when they finally did, I was ecstatic. Dogs offer a whole new dynamic to pet ownership. They are very dependent on their owners. Dogs are loyal and form attachments to their owners. They can learn difficult tricks and aim to please their owners. Unlike cats they can be easily walked on a leash and taken places. While their veterinary costs are higher than that of a cat the benefit of their companionship usually outweighs the higher cost. Dogs are perfect for people who want to be more involved.

Both pets offer many of the same benefits and also some that are different. Although they are completely unique species they can both make great pets. It is naïve to think that one is better than another. Both cats and dogs can make great pets; it all just depends on your needs and preferences in a pet. I know that I enjoy owning both as pets and I could never give up one for the other.

Love, Lust, or Run

By: Kertney Brozyna
Opinions Writer

Stacy London is back as the fashion guru in the new TLC series “Love, Lust or Run.” Many might recognize Stacy from her previous series “What Not to Wear.” After watching a few weeks of “Love, Lust or Run,” I’ve come to the conclusion that it is pretty much a condensed version of “What Not to Wear.” The new TLC series takes women with serious fashion issues and turns their look into a more fashionable choice. In the beginning, each person must experience watching what other people thought of how they looked. After the random person has viewed the picture of the fashion disaster, he or she must answer the question of whether they “love the look, would lust after the look, or run from the look.”

Photo courtesy of Google Images

Generally, everyone says they would run from the person. After viewing what the general public thinks of her appearance, she goes behind a curtain and strips herself bare of all her scary clothing, jewelry, and makeup. Stacy takes the woman and has her play with makeup and hair styles on the computer and then takes them shopping for new clothes. After the shopping, it’s mysteriously shown that the woman is getting a haircut. Then it is time for the big reveal. Of course, the women look fabulous. Stacy shows the public again the new look, and generally, everyone loves the new, modern look. Occasionally, some even lust after the woman. I highly recommend this show to anyone who loved “What Not to Wear” and is missing his or her daily fashion fix. Because of the show being only thirty minutes, anyone can watch this show when it’s on. “Love, Lust or Run” is on TLC (channel 23, here at the Joe) Friday nights at 8.



A Little Notice

By Johna Bottorff
Opinions Writer

So over the past weekend on the way to brunch in the café, I noticed there were a lot of people on campus. Once in the Halleck Center, there was a line to get into the café. But the line was back to the doors. The line wasn’t full of Saint Joe students though, there were a lot of people who in fact did not go here. Now as much as I look forward to brunch in the café on the weekends, I found this line very irritating. If the students would have gotten a notice that there would be so many people on campus, we could have planned accordingly. But it is quite an inconvenience to all of the students who stay on campus on the weekends. Granted there are few people on campus on the weekends because everyone

either leaves or goes out to eat. Those who can’t leave or go out to eat, have only the café as their source of food. How unfair is it to not only make that student wait in line to eat food that they have to pay for. The people in line do pay for their food but it makes the process of getting to the food a long and drawn out one. Maybe the café should open up another line for visitors, that way the students of Saint Joe can go through the line and not have to wait for Jeanette or Sharon to make change for the visitors. I know it would make the line go so much faster and there probably won’t be so much complaining from students because they have to wait in a long line to get food that they have already paid for. .

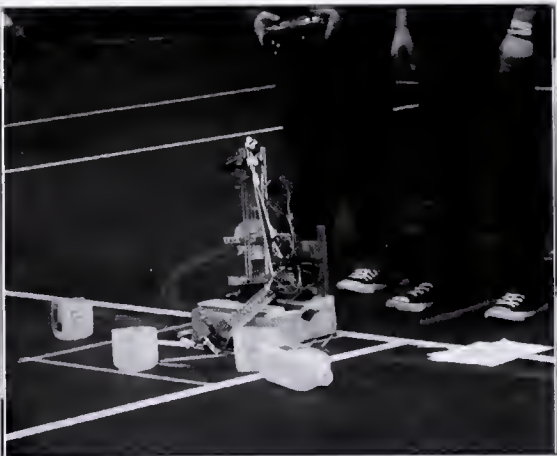


Photo courtesy of Rensselaer Adventures.

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We, the newspaper staff of *The Observer*, while exercising our First Amendment rights to freedom of speech, promise to adhere to the highest journalistic standards. *The Observer* will not print articles, editorials, or other material that misquote or misrepresent members or organizations within the Saint Joseph’s College community. While constantly striving to meet these goals, we can and will print retractions amending or remedying any problems brought to our attention.

Highways

By Karen Gramajo
Features Writer

The orange glow laminating in the cold night. The area is still. It's just me, myself, and I'm listening to Kylie Minogue's "Can't Get You Out of My Head". The highway is lonely, and the orange flickers to the sky, but the sky does not want it. Heaving a sigh as the trees fluttered by and the paved cloth embellished in shavings of the moon and sun, the mind went to maximum overload and triggered autopilot. The pipedreams began. I was the coolest bean in the can with my leather jacket, pocket watch, converse shoes, black shirt, tight jeans, and Mexican Fanta drink. I felt awesome.

Anyway, this is my absolute favorite past time. I dreamt that I can ride the U.S highways in my own automobile and continue on with memories meshed with fantasies clouding my mind. Techno, jazz, rock, Latin pop, dance, and classics (of course) play on the radio. For now, it's just my mother's vehicle. I enjoy this type of alone time, and this is one of the few time I can ever hold onto. The highways call for me, in the day and night. I miss the hum, cracking under the gravel, and the radio soothing the worries away. The end point is fast approaching, and I don't want it to come. I turn away from the familiar landscape, approaching fast, and enjoy the ride.

Daft Punk's "Forget about the World" begins. The orange lights stream onto the dash board and linger on the seats, not wanting to let me go. Radio city plays the classic hit "Come on Eileen" by Dexy's Midnight Runners. Harmony begins dancing with my soul and it soars with freedom and love. Styx, Boston, Anita Ward, Foo Fighters, 311, Eminem, The Andrew sisters, Sinatra, Bobby Darin, Ken Ishii, Wild Cherry, The Temptations, The Foundations, and the others grasp the roots of my mind and make me dance with delight.

The highway is speckled with diamonds and the music crawls from the bowels of the engine to my leather jacket. Orange flickers among the tar and the sky still doesn't want it. No one wants the orange, but me. It is beautiful with loneliness and rekindles nostalgia. Pricks come to the heart and music has her breath on the engine and hue mixed itself with the fume of gasoline. Circuits entwined the mimicry of old and new. The eccentric hands writing, sketching, and creating tints onto the walls of memories. Viewing the stars it gleamed green, red, blue, gold, and white. The time came and whisked the flow away. I reached the destination. It ended with King's Harvest "Dancing in the Moonlight". I can't leave the song unfinished. The music played its part while I finished my Fanta. Once it's done, I jammed the radio off and shimmied the keys out of the ignition. I'm back. It's going to be a pain.



Left: "The Hearts Tree" by TheJoyofColor.
Image courtesy of Etsy.com

Valentine's Day

By: Vivian Myers
Features Writer

Valentine's Day is here. Every store you walk into is covered in teddy bears, chocolates, and other gifts of love. Your friends tell you all about the plans and gifts they've gotten ready for their significant other. But during this time of year, this single day, you have nothing planned for anybody. You mope around and complain about being single and how Valentine's is just a Hallmark holiday.

Though Valentine's Day may have become bigger by the card companies, it doesn't mean it isn't a real holiday. Valentine's is just a single day that is devoted to the person that you are devoted to. You buy things you wouldn't normally buy. You plan special activities and spend a lot of time with that person.

I have to say that I am sorry to those of us who are single. But I also think that there are many other ways for you to look at Valentine's Day. Think about all the other people you are devoted to. You may be devoted to your parents, friends, or maybe just yourself. Treat yourself to something you really want to do. Join up with a group of friends and see a movie and grab dinner. Or maybe just send your parents a card wishing them a lovely day.

Valentine's doesn't just have to be for the lovers and their icky romance stuff. It can be for those who enjoy spending time with each other.

Marvel's Spiderman

By Joe Cain
Features Writer

For as long as the Marvel movie universe has been going, fans have been clamoring for Spiderman to join the Avengers on their bad guy beating conquest.

However, this hasn't really been possible. Despite being a Marvel character, the film rights to the web slinger are owned by the Sony Corporation, and, seeing how popular Spidey is, they've been really hesitant to let those rights go.

In fact, the entire reason that the two critically savaged Amazing Spiderman movies were made was so that they'd hold onto the rights.

Recently, however, it was announced that Sony and Marvel have come to an agreement, and Spiderman will be joining the Marvel movie universe.

Awesome as that is, personally speaking, I have some rather mixed feelings about all of this.

Quickly, let me recap what's known about the deal so far.

Spiderman will make his MCU (marvel cinematic universe) debut in 2016's Captain America: Civil War, followed by a new solo film in 2017.

Sony will maintain creative control of the films, sending the wall crawler back to high school, but Spidey will appear in Avenger/marvel films, and other Marvel characters may appear in supporting roles in his own films.

What this means for the currently scheduled movies is that Thor: Ragnarok, Captain Marvel, and Black Panther, are all being delayed by six months in order to make room for Spiderman.

Personally speaking, this kind of irritates me.

Black Panther and Captain Marvel are two of my favorite characters. Black Panther is the king of his own country, a monarch first and a superhero second.

Captain Marvel is an air force pilot with supersonic flight and enough strength to take on alien fleets with her bare hands.

Those are some awesome movies, and they're being pushed back, possibly altered, to make room for a character who's had five movies in the last



Above: Minimalist Spiderman poster.
Image courtesy of MINIMALISTPRINTS on Etsy.com

decade.

Don't get me wrong, I love Spiderman, and look forward to see him interacting with the likes of Iron Man and Captain America, it's just that we've seen a high school age Spidey before. It's been done, and it doesn't really add much to a franchise that's made it's name on lesser known characters.

Admit it, before the movies, you didn't know or care who Iron Man was.

Many online, myself included, have suggested that while Spiderman should definitely appear, Peter

Parker should not.

Quick history lesson.

In 2000 a new line of marvel comics called "The Ultimate universe" was created to bring a new generation of readers into comics, recasting old superheroes' origin stories in the 21th century. After nearly ten years worth of stories, Peter Parker was killed off, saving New York in a climactic final battle against arch nemesis the Green Goblin.

In the wake of his death, a younger schoolmate who idolized Spidey, a half Puerto Rican, half black freshman named Miles Morales, took over the mantle of Spiderman. Initially, fans were angry at Peter being replaced, but eventually, Miles became incredibly popular, spawning many great stories and becoming a fantastic character in his own right.

Don't get me wrong, I love Peter; his story has just been told over and over again, and writers of both the movies and the comics are afraid to let him grow up. They keep trying to cast him as the teenage/high school surrogate character for young fans to relate to, but Peter has already graduated college, gotten married and had a daughter in the pages of the comics. (Go read Spider-girl, alternate future story featuring his daughter. It's awesome.)

Miles would be a much fresher story, a new, unknown character with new enemies and struggles, and it would add a little diversity to the Marvel Movie universe that it so far lacks.

Now, I don't expect Marvel to do this of course. They're going to use Peter because it will make money, and ultimately that's their goal, even when it creates contradictions.

Their movie plans were too sacred to alter to make room for a Black Widow or other heroines to have their own movies, yet they changed everything for Spidey.

A space raccoon got a movie before everyone's favorite red headed assassin.

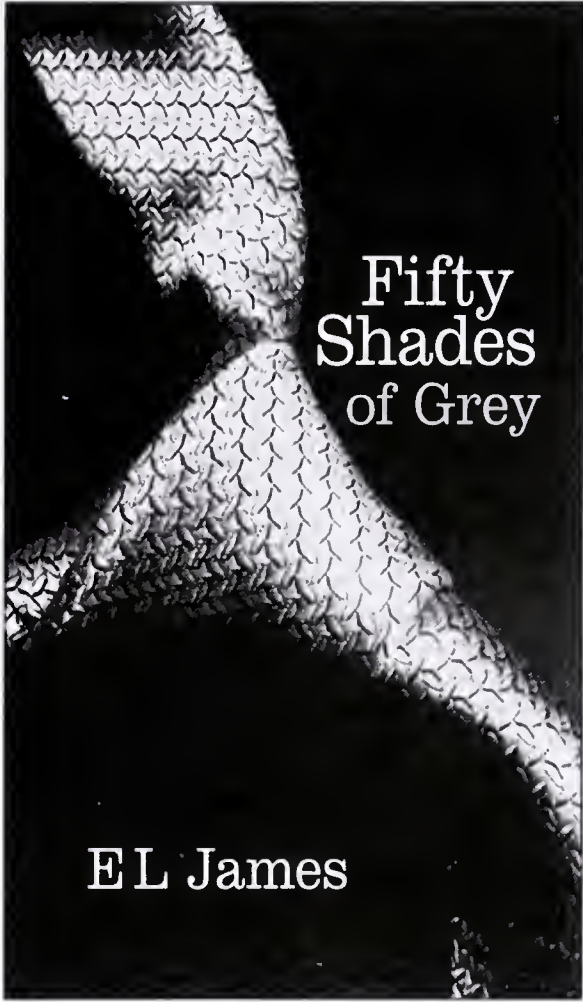
Oh well.

Overall, I'm looking forward to Spidey's inclusion on the Avengers, even if I don't really think it's entirely necessary. Though I'd like to see Miles show up in a supporting role at least.

Fifty Shades of... Not Just Sex

By Katie Davisson
Features Editor

Fifty Shades of Grey is a phenomenon that is overtaking the world. It started in 2012 when E.L. James transferred her Twilight fan-fiction to something that, while it lacked vampires and werewolves, wasn't something the everyday reader was used to. Many people have objections to this book, but many more are secretly ranting and raving about the release of the movie-adaptation that took place this weekend. And what's a more perfect release for the most popular 'romance' of the last three years than on Valentine's Day? Now, before you skip this article because you think this book is absolute scum, and a waste of some trees, hear me out.



Above: *Fifty Shades of Grey* book cover.
Image cc - risey of Google Images

Fifty Shades has gathered itself quite the reputation. From the relationship between the main characters Ana and Christian to the activities that they do behind closed doors-- doors that the reader has a very clear peephole through, there have been problems. Many discuss the relationship between Ana and Christian, saying that it's abusive and unhealthy. Others say that it's unfit for a younger audience, and those with certain religious beliefs have strong words against the book in general. To start everything off: I agree on all of these accounts. However, there is more to it than that.

Ana is a naive girl who, throughout the book, constantly struggles with her moral conscience and inner goddess. The conscience pops up when she feels that she is compromising her beliefs and way of living for this man that she's met and has become completely entranced with. For example, when Christian offers to buy Ana dinner, a laptop, or anything for that matter, the conscience pipes up. She is a true feminist and the side of Ana that is logical. The inner goddess shows up during the steamy scenes. She tangoes in red and drinks wine lazily, celebrating and conveying the true desires of Ana, even the ones she can't admit to herself. These two characters are very important to the objections about the book, because although it's not the most conventional approach to take, *Fifty Shades* is a story about a girl discovering herself; a theme that has arched over literature for ages.

Going on, sticking with the idea that this book promotes abusive relationships, is the character of Christian. A man who, James portrays, has reached a lot of success at a pretty young age. For those who haven't read the story, they don't know that Christian isn't just a masochist. James has created a complex character in the young philanthropist and though she portrays him as this untouchable God, an idea that I think is completely ridiculous, he's somewhat relatable. The thing is, that, as with most fictional characters, Ana and Christian are created to their extremes. Ana, an innocent virgin who has barely even kissed a boy meets Christian, a damaged, tortured man who has skeletons so deep in his closet that it's been padlocked shut, and their only way to get out is through a twisted form of therapy. Just like any couple that struggles through their demons, Ana and Christian work and grow together not one fully succumbing to the other, but becoming a completely new thing altogether.

Now, for as to why this book has become so popular. Many believe it's because the majority of the population

just cares about sex and nothing else, but if that were so then why is the highest consuming audience consisting of middle aged women from thirty to forty years of age? This is because they love the relationship that E.L. James has created, and it's a fairy tale that wasn't made up by the minds of Disney. A love story about a girl who is loved and found irresistibly attractive by a man who is wealthy, handsome, and sensitive by simply being herself. Ana attracts the attention of Christian in the first moments she is around him, an idea that any girl fantasizes about, so why wouldn't they be buying out the shelves of every copy they could find? Just like our favorite tales from Disney, Nicholas Sparks, and every other romance film or book of all time, E.L. James has woven an intoxicating tale about a boy and a girl who fall in love. Every story has their own ways of portraying this and James took her own artistic freedom to do this in a bit more of an unconventional sense.

As far as the naysayers who think this book should be burned in large bonfires, I say you need to take a chill pill. America has been set up in a way that we have the freedom to do as we please, within limits, and say what we want. Just like it's a personal decision of which God you choose to believe in, whom you decide to love, or what flavor of yogurt you wish to purchase at the grocery store, it's any one person's decision on what literature they want to partake in. It's up to the individual adult to choose what they want to influence their lives, and its up to the parents of children on what they are going to allow their children to be influenced by. Just like piercing parlors require a parents' consent, being aware of what your child is consuming in anyway comes in the parent job description.

I have yet to see the movie, but after reading not only the first, but the second and the third books, I can fully say that *Fifty Shades of Grey* is a piece of literature that covers more than just the topic of sex. Granted, it's not *Chicken Soup for the Twelve-year-old Soul*, but it's not just a bunch of erotica either. It's up to the individual person to decide whether they like this book or not, and that's their prerogative. As for me? I think it's a book about self-discovery that anyone can relate to, with more than a bit of intimacy thrown in, for those who like that kind of thing. I personally enjoyed reading the book, finding myself relating with the character of Ana and feeling sympathy for Christian. I can't wait for the movie and most definitely expect a review on that soon. Until next time...

Lily and Madeleine

By: Christina O'Connell
Features Writer

This past weekend I went to the art department with my friend Sam. She had to work on a sculpture project for her design class, and I decided to go so that I could focus better. I had let my endless amount of papers weigh on my mind and I couldn't procrastinate any longer. As Sam created beautiful art, writers block was hitting me hard. Struggling, I continued to pull up Spotify and play new songs. I noticed on the side of the music app that an album called "Fumes" was advertised on the side. Excitement welled up within me as I clicked on the artist page of Lily and Madeleine. Their new album was released on October 28, 2014 and they are also currently touring. The group consists of two sisters, singing beautiful folk/pop music. They hail from right here in Indiana, and many of their music videos are shot here as well. What makes me so excited to hear them is because I went to high school with Madeleine. She is very sweet and always showed off her gorgeous voice in the musicals and music ministry.

Madeleine and her sister Lily started posting videos of themselves covering different songs on Facebook and YouTube. This was the first time I had heard Lily sing along with Madeleine, and they were both extremely captivating. Once their music started to get out there, they got a record deal with Asthmatic Kitty Records. "Fumes" is now their third album, and their touring has even taken them overseas. When I listened to some of the songs off "Fumes", I also looked for new music videos. I watched their video of, "The Wolf is Free" and was blown away by all the remarkable comments they received. It was awesome to see someone that I went to high school with make her way through the music world. Lily and Madeleine sing in wonderful harmony, and they continue to grow as established folk artists. They are not huge, popular Grammy winners yet, but they are continuing to get recognized. If you haven't heard or listened to Lily and Madeleine, they have a unique sound. Their songs are slow to medium fast pace and do not have heavy instruments playing. They both sing together and sometimes have tiny solos individually. When they sing in unison it makes their music and the message they are sending, even more powerful. Their voices are calm and relaxing, perfectly matching the music they make. If you enjoy beautiful, pure folk/pop music, give Lily and Madeleine a listen. My favorite music is rock and roll, but also enjoy hearing Lily and Madeleine. Their voices together are haunting and inviting, pulling me in. I might be a rocker at heart, but I have a guilty pleasure for good old fashioned folk music with an enchanting twist.

Below: Album art from Lily & Madeline's new album "Fumes."
Photo courtesy of Google Images



Track & Field Races to Success

By Hannah Wallace
Sports Co-Editor

As the Pumas began their journey of the 2015 track season, they've only continued to improve on their expedition to success as they traveled to Grand Valley State University last weekend to compete at a two-day meet. There were both extremely impressive performances from the men and women's side including a number of individuals qualifying for a spot at Nationals.

Beginning from the men's side, Logan Barrett reached an NCAA provisional mark in the 5,000 meter race finishing in sixth place with a time of 14:28, not only qualifying for nationals, but replacing his school record in the 5,000. Justin Hays had an impressive performance as well as he ran a personal record in the 5,000 with a time of 15:04. Brian Eurtion came away from the weekend with a personal record as well in the mile with a time of 4:19. The second Puma who improved his mark for Nationals is Anthony Bradley finishing fourth in the shot put with a provision mark of 53 feet, 2.75 inches. Competing both days, Demar Malcom raced the 200 and 400 meter finishing with a time of 22.75 seconds in the 200 and 49.28 seconds in the 400. Oluwayemi Ogunbameru also saw a personal record in the 60 meter hurdles with a time 8.45



Pictured Logan Barrett. Photo Courtesy of Facebook.

seconds. Lastly, CJ placed eighth with a season best of 21 feet, 1.25 inches in the long jump. The women's team also performed a number of personal records beginning with Sam Nirva finishing in the 60 meter hurdles with a time of 8.80 seconds. LeAnna Knight swept away all the other long jumpers out there as she won her event with a jump of 17 feet, 9 inches. The distance

ladies had three personal records beginning with Frehewit Negassi in the 5,000 meter just short of seeing that "17" come across the clock with a time of 18:05. Rachel Bartz and Brooke Werstler also improved their 5,000 meter times with Bartz finishing at 19:32 and Werstler at 19:07. The personal bests only continue with Morgan Meyer throwing a mark of 37 feet 3 three inches in the

shot put. Lastly, Joli Jungles also jumped to success with a time of 10.14 in the hurdles. Looking at all of these improvements, it is no doubt the Pumas are just beginning to show the conference what they are capable of. The race to success continues on February 27th and 28th for the Great Lakes Valley Conference Championship.

Men's Basketball Seizes Close Victory

By Jessica Cates
Sports Co-Editor

The Saint Joseph's College men's basketball team began their final homestand of the season with a game against the Maryville University Saints on Thursday, February 5th. Although the Pumas started slow, they rebounded with 46 second half points to give them the 71-66 victory over the Saints (10-11, 5-7 GLVC). In the first half of the game, the Saints controlled the pace. They shot 47% from the field and took a 31-25 lead into the locker room at halftime. They did lose a key player, Armon Provo, late in the first half, though, and he never returned to the game. During the second half, the Pumas stayed closed early before claiming their first lead of the half with seven minutes remaining with a Jordan Seele three-point play. After a few more minutes of close play, the Saints scored their last basket of the match with 92 seconds left, while the Pumas continued to extend their lead until the close of the game. Statistical leaders for the Pumas include Cameron Vines, who finished with 15 points, Seele, who added 11 points and five rebounds, Dawson Gore, who scored 11 points, and Nathan Tidwell, who finished with seven points and seven rebounds. The following Saturday, February 7th, the Pumas took

on the University of Missouri St. Louis on their Senior Day. Although the Pumas won the second half for the second straight game, their effort fell short and the Tritons (17-6, 8-5 GLVC) came away with the 66-62 victory. The Pumas struggled offensively in the first half, shooting only 37% and going into halftime trailing 36-25. The Pumas bounced back in the second half, however, with 45% shooting, but with 10 minutes remaining they still trailed 53-43. An 8-0 rally by the Pumas brought them within one possession before a pair of free throws by the Tritons stopped their momentum. The Pumas bounced back and kept fighting, but fell short overall. Notable performances for the Pumas include Seele, who finished with 12 points, Tidwell, who added five points, 11 rebounds, and three steals, and senior Cameron Vines, who finished his final home game with 23 points and six rebounds. The Pumas went back on the road to take on the Bulldogs of Truman State University. The Bulldogs shot 61% to come away with the 112-75 victory over the Pumas. The Bulldogs (17-7, 9-5 GLVC) started strong and never slowed down, shooting 67% from the field and making nine of 13 three points to go into the locker room with a 59-34 lead after the first half. TSU was slightly less proficient in the second half, shooting 56% from the field, but it was enough to finish the job.



*Pictured Jonah Coble driving in for a basket
Photo Courtesy of Father Tim McFarland*

Statistical leaders for the Pumas include Vines, who had 21 points, Jonah Coble, who finished with 16 points, Davone Daniels, who added 11 points, and Tidwell, who finished with 10 points. The following Saturday, the Pumas traveled to Quincy University to take on the Hawks. The Hawks (12-13, 6-9 GLVC) came out strong and took the early lead before a 9-2 Pumas run tied the game later in the half. The Hawks responded, however, and went into the locker room with a 40-33 lead. Their lead continued to grow at the start of the second half. The

Pumas did not give up, though, and continued to battle to within single digits. However, the Hawks were not discouraged and managed to bring the lead back to 16 points before taking an 86-73 victory on the day. Notable performances for the Pumas include Vines, who had 24 points and four rebounds, Coble, who added 14 points, Seele, who recorded nine points and seven rebounds, and David Hill, who added eight points. The Pumas travel to Bellarmine University on Thursday, February 19th to take on the Knights. Tip-off is scheduled for 7:30 pm EDT.

Upcoming Events

February 19th

Women's & Men's Basketball vs. Bellarmine University in Louisville, KY
5:30 & 7:30 p.m.

February 21st

Women's & Men's Basketball vs. University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, IN
1:00 & 3:00 p.m.

Women's Tennis vs. Calumet College of St. Joseph
1:00 p.m.

February 22nd

Men's Tennis vs. Calumet College of St. Joseph
1:00 p.m.

February 26th

Women's & Men's Basketball vs. University of Indianapolis in Indianapolis, IN
5:00 & 7:30 p.m.

February 27th

Men's & Women's Track & Field at GLVC Championship in Indianapolis, IN
Softball vs. Trevecca Nazarene University in Evansville, IN
2:00 p.m.

Softball vs. Kentucky Wesleyan College in Evansville, IN
4:00 p.m.

February 28th

Men's & Women's Track & Field at GLVC Championship in Indianapolis, IN
Softball vs. Malone University in Evansville, IN
10:00 a.m.
Softball vs. Tiffin University in Evansville, IN
2:00 p.m.

February 19, 2015

Women Win 7 of Last 10 Games

By Jessica Cates
Sports Co-editor

The Saint Joseph's College women's basketball team took on the University of Missouri St. Louis Tritons on Saturday, February 7th for their senior day. The game was a nail biter with eight ties and 15 lead changes, but the Pumas came away with the 54-53 victory. The Pumas trailed early in the second half, but took the lead with less than six minutes remaining in the contest with an Abbey Titzer layup. The Tritons (11-10, 7-6 GLVC) tied the game seconds later, however, and from then on it was a back and forth match until the closing seconds. Junior Lauren Davis hit the game winner with 12 seconds, before the Pumas defense managed to protect the lead until time ran out. Notable performances for the Pumas include Kalea Parks, who finished with 12 points, three steals, and two blocks, Davis who recorded 11 points and four assists, and Titzer, who added six points and a team-high eight rebounds.

The Pumas then traveled to Truman State University to take on the Bulldogs. The Pumas held a 36-24 first half lead, but let it slip away leading to a 60-54 Bulldog victory. Early in the second half, the Bulldogs (13-9, 7-7 GLVC) did just enough to keep the Pumas in sight. Later, however, they began to inch their way back in the game. Just before the media timeout, they pulled within six and later, a Bulldog three pointer followed by two jump shots gave them a 52-51 lead with five minutes remaining. The Pumas kept battling and regained a 54-52 lead, before the Bulldogs tied the game at 54 with 1:45 left. The Pumas efforts to fight back were stopped by turnovers, allowing the Bulldogs to hit the go ahead basket and get the win. Statistical leaders for the Pumas include Davis, who had 18 points and five assists, Parks, who recorded 13 points and three rebounds, and Courtney Kvachkoff and Rolanda Curington, who each added nine points.

On the following Saturday, the Pumas traveled to Quincy University to take on the Hawks. Kalea Parks's double-double helped the Pumas to their 64-57 victory and their 7th win out of their past 10 games. Quincy (13-10, 8-7 GLVC) took an early lead in the game, however the Pumas fought back to the tie the game with two minutes remaining in the first half. They continued that run to take a 28-22 halftime lead. The second half began with a Hawks run that allowed them to tie the game at 30 less than five minutes into the second half. A 7-0 run by the Pumas helped them to regain the lead, but the game was not over yet. The Pumas held only a two point 47-45 lead with five minutes remaining. Out of a media timeout, a Lauren Davis jumper extended that lead to four before a pair of free throws and a jump shot by Parks gave the Pumas a 53-46 lead with only two minutes to go. As a team, the Pumas forced 19 turnovers in the contest and held the Hawks to only 34% shooting



Pictured Kalea Parks
Photo Courtesy of Father Tim McFarland

from the field. Statistical leaders for the Pumas include Parks, who finished with 29 points, 11 rebounds, four steals, and two blocked shots. Davis, who added 13 points, Brittany Morris, who had four steals and six assists, and

Kvachkoff and Katie Harold, who each recorded seven points.

The Pumas will travel to Bellarmine University to take on the Knights on Thursday, February 19th. Tip-off is scheduled for 5:30 pm EDT.

Softball Opens Season In Alabama

By Tiffany Gibson
Sports Staff Writer

The Saint Joseph's College softball team opened their season at the Charger Chillout hosted in Huntsville Alabama on Friday, February 6. They came back to Indiana with a record of 2-4. Their season opened on the 6th with a loss to Wayne State University. Briana Wagner pitched her first complete game only allowing two earned runs. Wagner allowed only a run in the first inning and the third inning against the Warriors. Wagner held Wayne State to three hits that game.

The Pumas struggled offensively in their first game. In the second inning, Ashley Whitaker started the inning off with a standing double, but was left stranded at second. The Warriors pitcher only allowed three hits against the Pumas. The Pumas came into the

second game of their first day with a vengeance defeating Ohio Dominican University 5-2. The Pumas showed off their stellar defense, while Megan Swartzengraber pitched six complete innings. Swartzengraber gave up two runs in her six innings pitched. Freshman, Jordan Schneider, went 2 for 3 with a double and 1 RBI for that game. Haley Miller also hit 2 for 3 with 1 RBI.

On Saturday, the Pumas ended the day with another split. They began their day with a win over Ferris State University. The Pumas were able to push five runs across in seven innings while holding Ferris State's offense to zero. In the first inning, Wagner scored on a wild pitch. In the second inning, Whitaker hit a double scoring Kalene Davis and Tiffany Gibson. Whitaker went 2 for 3 with 2 RBIs and Schneider went 2 for 3 with a homerun.

Swartzengraber was recorded as the winning pitcher for the Pumas.

The Pumas then fell to Union University 6-2. Morgan Akre was the starting pitcher. Union started off strong, scoring their first run in the first inning. The Pumas responded in the second, tying the game in the second inning with an RBI double by Kylie Hirschak. Megan Swartzengraber came in as relief in the third inning. Union hit two homeruns in the third inning, putting three more runs on the board. The Pumas tried to chip away with an RBI by Ka Davis. Jessica Cates came in during the fifth inning, allowing two runs.

The final day, the Pumas fell to West Georgia Tech and Kentucky Wesleyan. The Pumas lit up their offense against West Georgia Tech scoring four runs in the first two innings. However, West Georgia Tech battled back and tied it up in the sixth inning before scoring the



Pictured Briana Wagner
Photo Courtesy of Father Tim McFarland.

winning run in the bottom of the seventh.

The Pumas then faced Kentucky Wesleyan College and fell 3-10. Stephanie Winter went 2 for 3 with a double and 1 RBI. Tiffany Gibson went 2 for 3 with a double and 2 RBIs.

for 3 with a double and 2 RBIs. Swartzengraber pitched four complete innings, Cates pitched 2 innings, and Schneider pitched one.

The Pumas will continue their season at the USI Spring Classic on February 27th and 28th.

Puma Athlete Spotlight: Jordan Schneider

By Katelyn Konow
Sports Staff Writer

Jordan Schneider is a freshman from Fort Wayne, Indiana. She is a Biochemistry major. She plays outfield and pitches for the softball team.

If you didn't play softball, what sport would you like to play collegiately and why?

"Soccer, because when I was younger I played that for eight years of my life and because I enjoyed watching my older brother play in high school."

As a freshman what has been your biggest struggle so far?

"Being away from home. I can't travel back and forth because of distance."

What has been your biggest success thus far?

"Getting a 4.0 with semester grades."

Who is your biggest role model on the team and why?

"Stephanie Winter because she always works hard on and off the field, is determined, driven, and goes after what she wants."

If you didn't pick St. Joe's, where would you have ended up and why?

"The University of Saint Francis

because there would have been a softball opportunity there as well."

If we asked your parents right now, what would they say they are most proud of you for?

"All the hard work I have put in over the years for softball and school."

Where do you see yourself in the workforce and why?

"Radiology because I'm interested in the human body. It will also enable me to be able to help others and to challenge myself."

What's a weird fact that no one really knows?

"I was really mean as a child.

Mom would have friends call and ask to have play dates and would never take me to ball pit areas because I would pelt the balls at other kids."

What are some of your goals for the season?

"Win conference, to make it to the post season, play my role on the team to the best of my ability, to be the best teammate, and to earn a starting position."

What's your dream job?

"My dream job is to be a WWE total diva."

Know an athlete that deserves the spotlight? Email their name to jcu8913@saintjoe.edu



Photo courtesy of Saint Joseph's College Athletics Website

the back page Creative Corner

Not the One for You/Untitled/I Hate Titles/Not Interested

By Gloria Michelle Leonard

I'm one hell of a woman,
Not a helluva catch.
You're another player in a game
I didn't sign up to play.
I'm not another
One-night-stand-never-call-me-again,
I don't exist to make your life
A little less miserable. Or your bed
A little less cold.
I want that cliché, holding hands,
Making breakfast, Growing old.
You are not the sun, or the world,
Or anyone I'll ever need.
I'm not looking to fill your time,
While wasting mine,
Until you find "the one."
Let me eliminate the thrill of the chase,
I'm not some trophy for your case.



Prisma Pencil Drawing By Lauren Elizabeth Fernandez

Price

by Vivian Myers

Grime and sweat of our days events
Cling to our skin like everlasting hints
Now it's time to end our day
With our last and final play

Waiting for the signal to blow
Sounding with a trumpets blow
Tossing, swimming in and out
While trumpets, euphs and mellos shout

We dance, we swing, we march, we beat
To the music we've been known to repeat
Wishing this moment would last for life
Knowing nothing comes without a price

Larynx

By Nicole B. Thomsen

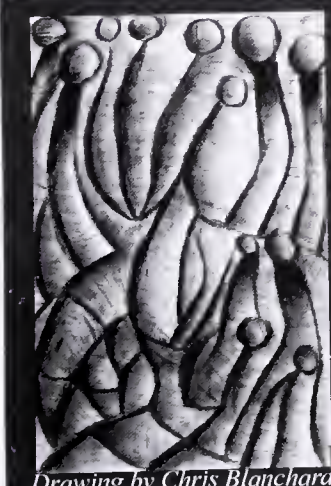
Hair.
It finds me.
Every morning,
Or afternoon.
If I'm blessed
Dinner too.

In this cafe,
Hair finds me.
It harbors in my
ketchup
covered
scrambled
eggs.

Stalling.
Waiting, for the opportunity
to reveal its ebony coarseness
on
my
tongue.

My esophagus twinges with utter delight!
The mane gives my larynx
one
last
caress.

So long mane,
I presume,
I shall see you again.
If I'm blessed,
It'll
be
this
afternoon.



Drawing by Chris Blanchard

Dear SJC,

If you are interested in
being featured in the back
page, please send any art or
literature works to:

ntu9187@saintjoe.edu or
glv9696@saintjoe.edu



Hand Coiled Pottery by Sam Nirva



Ink Print by Nicole B. Thomsen